

Appl. No. 09/819,194
Amdt. B dated June 20, 2003
Reply to Office action of April 28, 2003

REMARKS

Applicant submits this amendment after final rejection and requests that it be considered pursuant to the authority and procedures set forth in 37 CFR 1.116 and MPEP 706.07(f), 714.12 and 714.13. Summarizing this amendment, claims 1-6, 8-10, 12 and 19 have been amended, while claims 7 and 11 remain unchanged.

The application relates to antifriction bearings and specifically to the reconditioning of such bearings. Indeed, the apparatus claims as originally presented called for "equipment" for performing various procedures required to recondition a bearing, including inspecting the bearing, repairing it, and lubricating it. Indeed, claim 8 included equipment for opening the cage of a bearing, equipment for repairing the raceway on a cone and equipment for closing a cage. The examiner concluded that U.S. patent 4,643,476 disclosed all this "equipment" in a mobile facility, noting that the expressions "equipment for" were not accompanied by any structure.

By this amendment applicant has deleted the expression "equipment for" at each occurrence in the claims and substituted for it the expression "means for". Each "means for" expression is accompanied by some functional recitation (e.g., "means for inspecting a bearing"). The Patent Act at 35 USC 112 sanctions means-plus-function limitations and gives them the status of structural limitations. Thus, the claims now recite structure — indeed, the corresponding structure set forth in the specification and

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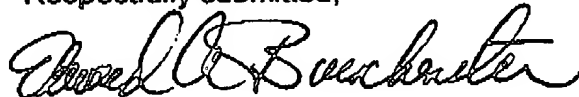
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equivalents thereof. And this structure is set forth in the specification in a way that one skilled in the field of reconditioning bearings will understand what it is. Moreover, that structure does not correspond to band repair equipment and is thus not anticipated by the Montgerard patent. Furthermore, one seeking to recondition antifriction bearings would not turn to band instruments or equipment for repairing such instruments for inspiration, so the structure set forth in the claims is not rendered obvious by the Montgerard patent.

This amendment is submitted with two months of the Office action to which it responds and thus complies with the procedure set forth in paragraph 4 of the Office action for extending the period for reply.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the final rejection and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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